

Letters, Notes, and Answers

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS

Sleep disturbed by Dreams

"G.P." writes: I should be glad of information as to treatment of disturbed sleep owing to constant dreams in old and younger people.

Pruritus Ani

Dr. H. WOOD-HILL writes: After trying innumerable forms of treatment for this intractable condition, I have found painting freely with a preparation of equal parts of tar, collodion, and acetone to act like a charm.

Snoring

"SUGG" writes: This objectionable procedure can take place only when the mouth is open, as only then can the mechanism of stertor be brought into action. Shut the mouth of the snorer, and, so far as the problem of snoring is concerned, "all's well." One should bear in mind the need to eliminate from the problem the question of a possible physical factor or cause. A sleeping person is not always relaxed, but when a sleeper lies upon his back, and is relaxed, the lower jaw falls. If he continues to breathe (that is, inspire and expire) fully through either mouth or nose, snoring does not occur. It is only when the stream of air, usually in the act of inspiration, is divided by nasal and oral breathing that stertor takes place. More shortly put, a sleeper lying on his back with the mouth open does not necessarily snore, though he may snort occasionally. The disagreeable noises are caused by the "flapping in the wind" of the soft palate and/or uvula. On the subjects of (a) prevention and (b) cure of snoring much could be written, but I must be brief. The old-fashioned method of our grandparents may be tried—that is, the sewing of a cotton-reel to the middle of the back of nightshirt or pyjama trousers may lead to a change of position by the snorer. A child, or indeed an adult, may be moved from the dorsal attitude, or may be persuaded to move therefrom by an appeal to the subconscious, without being awakened, but an early return to the original position is to be expected. A change from the dorsal decubitus may not be enough (though it often is) to prevent snoring, because lying on the side does not always prevent the jaw from dropping. In a case of obstinate or recurring snoring a properly made and properly fitted "lower-jaw-fracture" bandage with skull-cap attachment, as obtainable (usually for other purposes) from beauty parlours, will prevent falling of the jaw during relaxation in sleep, and so prevent snoring, whatever the position. A snorer may be aroused

by his own snoring, or if merely dozing may continue to doze while hearing his own snores. Postural discipline will, then, help in prevention; but the snoring can be cured by suggestion, because a habit of snoring can be, by suggestion (the essence of which is iteration), converted into a habit of not snoring if the intelligent co-operation of the patient is obtainable.

Income Tax

Replacement of Car

"T. H." had a car which cost £480 in 1928. He sold it for £30 when the written-down value was £38, and bought a new car for £218. What can he claim?

** (1) As an obsolescence allowance, £38—£30=£8; this is treated as an expense of the year when the transaction took place. (2) Depreciation for the following income tax year on £218.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

Influenza in Belfast

Dr. MARGARET H. ELLIOTT (Belfast) writes: The type of influenza generally prevalent at the present time varies slightly from the usual form of epidemic. Whether this is significant remains to be seen. The disease as commonly found to-day seizes on young and old, and *la grippe* is a name which still applies. The acute attack is common in the old, the young, and those predisposed by preceding cardiac or lung complaints, and is likely to prove serious. It is ushered in by sudden angina and collapse with pallor and sweating, as in massive lobar affections of the lungs, when accompanying pyrexia, or in conditions such as anaphylaxis or asthma. The subsequent course is similar to that of acute bronchitis or lobar pneumonia. In those more young and hale the attacks are limited to malaise and ague-like pain. There is also the more usual gastric type of attack, with accompanying emesis and headache as prominent symptoms. Occasionally these attacks begin with symptoms like those of peritonitis or of an "acute abdomen." After the attack is over there is a predisposition in the individual to further attacks of infection, unless the ordinary sensible precautions are instituted.

British Health Exhibit at Copenhagen

Britain is represented in the Copenhagen Health Exhibition by the Fitter Britain Exhibit which was on display in the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow last year. The Health Exhibition was opened in the Copenhagen Forum by the Prime Minister, Dr. Stauning, on March 17, and will remain open for one month. While considerable emphasis is laid upon the anatomy and physiology of the body in other sections of the exhibition, the Fitter Britain Exhibit shows rather the organization of health services and the measures taken in this country to prevent ill-health. The exhibit, which is in the hands of the Central Council for Health Education, is arousing great interest both in medical circles and amongst the general public. One of its main features is the mechanical man, a large figure showing symbolically how some of the main human organs work, and explaining their operations by means of a synchronized talk. There is also a model of a modern health clinic such as the health authorities are now setting up in many centres in this country. The exhibit was sent to Denmark by the Central Council for Health Education in co-operation with the British Council.

Sequel to a Warning

Lieutenant-Colonel W. A. SPONG (Sutton Benger, Chippenham) writes with reference to the warning which appeared in the *Journal* of March 25 (p. 656) about the "traveller" in a type of crêpe rubber bandage: Your readers will be pleased to hear that this man has been arrested at Fareham. I would advise those who, like myself, have been "done" to communicate with their local police superintendent.

We have received from Ciba Limited, 40, Southwark Street, London, S.E.1, a booklet entitled *The Sex Hormones*, which gives a brief description of their uses and a list of the particular products made by this firm, from whom the booklet can be obtained on application.